



## **Updates on National Transportation Safety Board Recommendations**

### **EMS Response to Rural Roadway Incidents**

On January 6, 2008 a motor coach carrying 52 passengers and a driver overturned on a rural road in Mexican Hat, Utah resulting in 44 injuries and 9 fatalities. According to a National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigation, emergency medical notification and response to motor coach crashes in rural areas were major issues in the aftermath of this crash.

The NTSB issued two safety recommendations to FICEMS in 2009:

- *Develop a plan that can be used by States and public safety answering points to pursue funding for enhancements of wireless communications coverage that can facilitate prompt accident notification and emergency response along high risk rural roads, as identified under SAFETEA-LU criteria, and along rural roads having substantial large bus traffic (as defined by the criteria established in NTSB Safety Recommendation H-09-07). (H-09-04)*

The FICEMS 911 & Medical Communications Ad Hoc Committee oversaw the development of a response to recommendation H-09-04, which was approved by FICEMS in December 2010. A report in response to the recommendation (available online at [http://ems.gov/pdf/2010/DecMtg/Response\\_NTSB\\_Recommendation\\_1.pdf](http://ems.gov/pdf/2010/DecMtg/Response_NTSB_Recommendation_1.pdf)) that includes a needs assessment for local and state Public Safety Answering Point administrators as well as funding options was transmitted to the NTSB in 2011. More information was provided to the NTSB in 2013 and the recommendation was **closed** with “Acceptable Action” response.

- *Evaluate the system of emergency care response to large-scale transportation-related rural accidents, and, once that evaluation is completed, develop guidelines for emergency medical service response and provide those guidelines to the States. (H-09-05).*

The FICEMS Preparedness Committee oversaw three projects with the National Association of State EMS Officials and the Institute of Medicine in response to recommendation H-09-05. A final report (available online at [http://ems.gov/pdf/2011/December/06-FICEMS\\_Final\\_Report-H-09-05.pdf](http://ems.gov/pdf/2011/December/06-FICEMS_Final_Report-H-09-05.pdf)) outlining the projects and including guidelines for states to evaluate their emergency care response capabilities was sent to the NTSB in late 2011 and the recommendation was **closed** with “Acceptable Action” response.

## **The Use and Availability of Helicopter EMS**

In response to a series of Helicopter Emergency Medical Services (HEMS) crashes in 2008 and as a result of an overall increase in fatal accidents involving HEMS operations, the NTSB issued two additional safety recommendations to FICEMS in 2009:

- *Develop national guidelines for the use and availability of helicopter emergency medical transport by regional, State, and local authorities during emergency medical response system planning. (A-09-102)*

The FICEMS Medical Oversight Committee is overseeing the response to these recommendations. Recommendation A-09-102 is being addressed through an interagency agreement between the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). The agreement, funded by NHTSA in 2010, calls for the CDC, with input from NHTSA, to convene a panel of experts in Helicopter EMS and emergency medicine to develop guidelines for the use and availability of air ambulances. Draft guidelines were developed and are under Department of Transportation review. The recommendation remains **Open – Acceptable Response** until publication of the guidelines.

- *Develop national guidelines for the selection of appropriate emergency transportation modes for urgent care. (A-09-103)*

Recommendation A-09-103 is being addressed by developing evidence-based guidelines to describe the clinical conditions in which air ambulance transport would be recommended for patients with traumatic injury. With funding support from NHTSA and the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), an expert panel was convened to develop the clinical review questions and to research and synthesize the existing clinical evidence. The panel has developed draft guidelines that will be published in the journal *Prehospital Emergency Care* in January 2014. The recommendation remains **Open – Acceptable Response** until publication of the evidence-based guidelines.